# Jalal Abualrub Part 3

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Thank you Sina for your email, and I will check the site you mentioned in your email. If I may start our conversation by asking the first question, that is: describe to me the kind of Muslim you were before you left Islam? Were you a practicing Muslim, did you read any of the original resources of Islam, and in what language, were you raised as a Muslim, did you attend congregational prayer, for example, and participate in Islamic activities. Your answer will help me understand why you left Islam.

I have met people who say they were Muslims before, but on questioning them on what it is they understood from Islam, they did not indicate that they really knew the religion. Some of them were angered by what some Muslims did or said and confused that with Islam. Finally, you are welcome to post our conversations on your website so that the benefit is transferred to others.

Thank you.

You can say I was a typical Iranian modern Muslim. The majority of Iranians are Shiites, which is the second largest sect of Islam. But Iran is also the birthplace of Sufism and Sufism has had a great impact on the way the average Iranians view Islam. Many Iranian sages found the Quran too mundane with little or no spiritual content, so they tried to reinterpret the verses of that book and vest them with spiritual significance to satisfy their own refined mystical palate. As a result, Sufism does not have the hard edges that traditional Islam has. It is much more tolerant and much more mystical. Therefore it is fair to say that Iranian Muslims are distinct from the typical Muslims, the kind you find in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. You could say the Iranian Muslims fit the ideal picture of the "moderate Muslim". I come from this background.

Most of the Iranian modern Muslims did not go to mosques or paid much attention to the Mullahs. The Islamization of Iran which led to the Islamic revolution was so sudden that took everyone by surprise. Khomeini said people did not make the revolution because they wanted a better life; they made the revolution because they wanted Islam. That of course was not true. People made the revolution because they wanted freedom of speech. But foolishly they followed a religious leader who lied to them and promised them such freedom.

The average Iranian is still a moderate Muslim. He does not go to the Mosque, does not respect the Mullahs, he fasts and prays and views Islam as a personal faith. The average Iranian has a Sufi understanding of Islam. But of course Sufism is not Islam. It is a borrowed philosophy. So in a sense the mainstream Muslims are right to call Iranians heretics.

If you want to show I have never been a Muslim to begin with, you are absolutely right. Most of the Iranians and perhaps most of the Muslims are not real Muslims in the true sense of the word. Frankly I never thought men are exalted our women and are a degree superior to them. I never thought chopping hands of the thief is justice. I never agreed with stoning victims of rape. I never thought apostates should be put to death. I never hated the Jews enough. I always thought God is interested in our deeds and not in our beliefs and good people will not end in hell just because they do not believe in Islam. These are very much the Sufi influence in the Persian psyche but they are not Islamic. Iranians adore their great poets and their poets invariably were Sufis. So Sufism has left an indelible mark on the way Iranians perceive Islam.

The moment I read the Quran and realized my romantic view of Islam is based on false premises and Islam is completely deprived of any humanity, I realized I have never been a Muslim in my entire life.

So if you say that a true Muslim would never leave Islam, I agree. I was not a true Muslim and I suspect the majority of so called Muslims are not true Muslims. I am interested to reach out to these people and tell them the truth. The true Muslims are the terrorists. I will never be able to reach them nor am I interested to do that.